

Brother Steward

Lay Reader Message

Giving More than Money

For many, giving is associated with money. Giving includes money, but, as faithful givers, we first give ourselves, and the giving of our gifts and resources will follow (2 Corinthians 8:5). We all have different gifts and blessings to share. God has blessed us with gifts of wood-working, sewing, serving, teaching, singing, gardening, leading, cleaning, etc. Whatever our skills or gifts, we can use and give them to extend the kingdom and help others. Through faith, we are compelled to give because we know that God is the source of all of our blessings (2 Corinthians 5:14). Giving expresses our gratitude to God for what he has given to us.

In the third chapter of Acts, we find a lame beggar at the temple in Jerusalem, pleading with people to give him money. Peter and John were entering the temple, and they heard the beggar's plea for help. Perhaps the beggar saw Peter with his hand in his pocket, but the hand came out empty, dashing the beggar's hopes. *"Then Peter said, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk' "* (Acts 3:6). Peter's pocket was empty, but he was willing to give what he had, and he had something worth far more than a pocketful of money.

God wants us to give more than our money. He wants us to give of ourselves, our hearts and our lives, and to share our time and talents. We have been blessed to be a blessing. Thank God Peter had more to give the beggar than money. In order to use our gifts and blessings effectively in service for others, let us ask God for guidance as to how to best use and give what he has given us. Through faith, we can be confident that God will open our eyes and hearts for opportunities to give and share what he has entrusted to us.

Brother Steward

Don't "kick the can" in the New Year!

Back in the Dark Ages, even we Monks had a sporting event. Whoever kicked the can, actually a pot, down the road the farthest would get a prize. An extra helping of shepherd's pie or plum pudding!

Today, kicking the can down the road means putting off things until tomorrow, such as solving a problem or avoiding a responsibility. Unfortunately, today many stewards put off prayer, going to church, helping the homeless, or giving to the offertory collection.

We'll do it next week, they say. But just like in the old days, there is a prize for acting today. So don't kick the can down the road. Use our time, talents, and treasure, today and every day, to fulfill God's mission on earth. If we do, we'll win His merciful and unrequited Love, an eternal prize above all. And you can't kick about that!



God Bless!



Brother Steward

Stewardship and Playoffs

The bowl season always motivated our Abbot to retell stories of guts, gore and glory. “Centuries ago, at the Roman Coliseum, it was always the Lions chewing up the Christians. And later, during the Dark Ages, our win-loss record for The Crusades wasn’t too hot either. But in spite of the odds, Christianity always prevailed over evil through faith, prayer, courage and commitment.” So, he continued, “again the playoffs are upon us in college and in the pros.



What does it teach us? What is our Christian Playbook against Team Satan, and the forces of evil? We should take time to prepare through prayer, worship and recruitment of the willing. Spreading the faith is our strongest offense. And like those spectacular athletes on the gridiron, each with their own talent of passing, blocking, and running; we must use our talents to help others. Yes, feeding the hungry, clothing and sheltering the poor, and caring for the sick, is a primary goal. And lastly we must use our assets to support the Lord’s work through our church and out-reach ministries.

This is the playbook of good stewardship. Make this our New Year’s Resolution: Use our God-given gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure to win one for Jesus. He is our Coach, we are his players, and the game of life awaits.

God Bless!

